implementation of the recommendations of the World Health Organisation will be completed in 98 hospitals.

(c) The process is continuing in remaining hospitals and will be completed by 2002-2003.

Fire in Army ammunition depot at Birdhwal

517. SHRI K. KALAVENKATA RAO:
SHRI NANA DESHMUKH:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a devastating fire broke out in army ammunition depot at Birdhwal near Suratgarh in Rajasthan;

(b) whether any human lives were lost in the fire;

(c) the estimates of losses in terms of equipment and ammunition suffered in the fire;

(d) whether any enquiry has been ordered into the causes of fire;

(e) if so, the conclusion of the enquiry; and

(f) the steps taken to ensure that such accidental fires do not recur?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI KRISHNAM RAJU): (a) yes Sir.

(b) Yes Sir. One sepoy died.

(c) The estimate of loss of equipment/ammunitions destroyed due to fire is Rs. 3.78 Crores approximately.

(d) Yes, Sir,

(e) The cause of fire can only be known after completion of Court of Inquiry which is still in progress.

(f) The following steps have been taken to prevent occurrence of such fires in future:—

(i) All depots have been directed to update safety and security instructions.

(ii) All depots have been inspected by a Board of Officers to check adequacy of their safety and security arrangements.

(iii) Shortages in fire fighting equipment are being made up and defective equipment repaired.

(iv) Unserviceable ammunition is being disposed of on priority.

(v) Allotment of additional funds for creation of more storage accommodation, for shifting ammunition presently stored on open plinths under canvas to Explosive Stores Houses.

Testing of interception and destruction capabilities during Poorna Vijay Exercise

518. SHRI K. KALAVBENKATA RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has tested and achieved the capability during Poorna Vijay Exercises in Rajasthan of interception and destruction of enemy aircrafts equipped with nuclear weapons;

(b) whether similar exercises were also held in Punjab region; and

(c) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) Interception of hostile aircraft is not related to the types of weapons it carries. The Indian Air Force has the capability to intercept intruders violating Indian airspace.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Indian Air Force has been practising these interceptions routinely.

Accidents of Fighter Planes

519. SHRI ABANI ROY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a MIG-29 aircraft crashed in the fields of Ajnoha village in Hoshiarpur district on 4th July, 2001;

(b) if so, the number of fighter planes crashed during the last three years;

(c) whether the inquiry instituted by Government in each air crash has since been made public;

(d) whether the steps taken to check crashes of MIG fighter planes have failed to achieve any results; and